



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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## ***CAREX MULTICOSTATA*** **MANY-RIBBED SEDGE**

Many-ribbed Sedge is a grass-like perennial that forms small to large clumps with stems up to 60 cm high. Basal leaves are reduced to scales, and stem leaves are flat, 2-4 mm wide and crowded just above those that are reduced. Flowers are clustered in egg-shaped spikes, 6-10 mm long; the perigynia occupy most of the spike, but there are a few inconspicuous male flowers at the base. Spikes are aggregated into a head at the top of the stem and subtended by 2-3 inconspicuous bracts. Scales subtending each perigynium are membranous and brownish with a thickened midrib and slightly shorter and narrower than the perigynia. Green to brownish perigynia are lance-shaped and 4-6 mm long with a gently tapered tip that is entire-margined, deeply cleft, and round in cross-section at the tip. There are 10 or more nerves on the convex outer face of the perigynia. Each perigynium has 2 stigmas, an an achene that is lens-shaped, and winged margins. Flowering and fruiting in July.

The relatively long perigynium, 4-6 mm, with 10 or more distinct outer nerves are distinguishing characters among related species. It differs from the more common *CAREX PHAEOCEPHALA* in its relatively wider leaves greater than 2 mm. A hand lens or microscope and technical key are needed for positive identification.